



State of California  
The Natural Resources Agency  
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PROJECT TITLE	Sierra Glen West, Montgomery, Big Hill Rd. Fuel Break Maintenance		
PROJECT LOCATION	T2N, R15E, Portion of Sections 10, 11, & 15 MDBM	COUNTY	Tuolumne
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	Roger Petersen		
ADDRESS	18464 Striker Court Sonora, CA 95370	PHONE	(209) 532-7424 x 109

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project area is located in northern Tuolumne County, approximately 5 miles northeast of the city of Sonora. The project area ranges from approximately 3,000 feet to 4,000 feet in elevation above sea level. Vegetation type is at the transition zone with lower portions of the project in the chaparral belt and the upper portion entering the mixed coniferous zone. Native oaks such as black oak and live oak along with ponderosa pine and incense cedar are the dominant tree species found. Brush species include manzanita, toyon, ceanothus, poison oak, and bear clover. The project consists of maintenance and improvement of existing fuel breaks. Maintenance consists of removal of ground and ladder fuels that have re grown since the original fuel reduction work was performed around 2005-2006 along with widening of the fuel break up to 400 feet in total width for better defense against vegetation fires. The project area is approximately 125 acres in size. Vegetation removal will consist of hand cutting and piling for burning during a safe burn window along with mechanical mastication with light and/or heavy equipment. Heavy equipment will be confined to slopes that do not exceed 40%. Trees up to 12 inches DBH may be removed to achieve the necessary spacing needed for achieving a functional fuel break. Larger trees shall not be cut unless deemed to be a safety hazard. Grass, forbs and other low-lying ground vegetation will not be targeted for removal. The primary goal is to disrupt the horizontal and vertical continuity of fuels in order to provide a safe and feasible means of defense against the high probability of vegetation fire within the wildland urban interface.

### EXEMPTION STATUS

- ☒ Categorical Exemption Type/Section: Class 4; 15304 Minor Alterations to Land  
☐ Statutory Exemption (state code section):  
☐ Ministerial (§21080(b)(1); 15268)  
☐ Declared Emergency (§21080(b)(3); 15269(a))  
☐ Emergency Project (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))

### REASONS PROJECT IS EXEMPT

The Class of Exemption to be used is 14 CCR 15304- Minor Alterations to Land. The project consists of maintaining and improving existing fuel breaks. The project has been designed to conduct operations outside of the nesting period for Great Gray Owls. A query of the CNDDDB did not reveal the presence of any other sensitive species. DFW conducted a site visit and did not recommend additional protection measures. Protection measures for watercourses are consistent with The California Forest Practice Rules. The Regional Water Quality Control Board was consulted and did not recommend additional protection measures. Protection measures for archaeological sites are consistent with the original project and impacts are not expected. A CAL FIRE archaeologist was consulted and additional protection measures were not recommended. All burning will be done in accordance with a permit for the Tuolumne County Air Pollution Control District.

### DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING



*Duane Shintaku* 12/18/14  
Duane Shintaku, Deputy Director Date  
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection